

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A server capable of communication with a user terminal and a helper terminal for providing information to the user terminal, comprising:

5 storage means for storing helper information of the helper terminal;

reception means for receiving from the user terminal an inquiry about information desired by a user; and

10 selection means for selecting the helper terminal in accordance with the inquiry received by said reception means and the helper information stored in said storage means.

15 2. A server according to claim 1, wherein the helper information stored in said storage means is keywords of the information which the helper terminal can provide.

20 3. A server according to claim 1, wherein:

said reception means receives at least one of a communication ability of the user terminal and a desired fee for obtaining the information desired by the user; and

25 the server further comprises transmission means for transmitting the inquiry received by said reception means to the helper terminal selected by said selection

means.

4. A server according to claim 1, further comprising:

5 notice means for notifying the helper terminals
selected by said selection means to the user terminal;
and

connection means for establishing a communication
between the user terminal and the helper terminal
10 selected by the user from the helper terminal notified
by said notice means.

5. A server according to claim 4, wherein said
notice means notifies at least one of a communication
15 ability and a desired fee of the helper terminal
selected by said selection means.

6. A server according to claim 4, further comprising:

20 second storage means for storing information
provided by the helper terminal;

wherein said notice means notifies the information
stored in said second storage means.

25 7. A server according to claim 6, wherein at
least a permission for storing the information in said
second storage means is required to be received from

the helper terminal or a permission for notifying by said notice means is required to be received from the user terminal.

5 8. A server according to claim 1, further comprising payment requesting means for requesting the user terminal to pay a fee for the obtained information.

10 9. A server according to claim 1, further comprising payment processing means for paying a fee for the information provided by the helper terminal.

15 10. A server according to claim 1, further comprising fee collecting means for collecting a registration fee for storing the helper information in said storage means.

20 11. A server according to claim 1, further comprising advertisement distributing means for distributing advertisement information to at least one of the user terminal and the helper terminal.

25 12. A server according to claim 1, further comprising extraction means for extracting keywords from the inquiry received by said reception means, wherein said selection means selects the helper

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terminal in accordance with the keywords extracted by
said extraction means.

13. A control method of controlling a system
5 having a server capable of communication with a user
terminal and a helper terminal for providing
information to the user terminal, comprising:

a storage step of storing helper information of
the helper terminal;

10 a reception step of receiving from the user
terminal an inquiry about information desired by a
user; and

a selection step of selecting the helper terminal
in accordance with the inquiry received at said
15 reception step and the helper information stored by
said storage step.

14. A control method of controlling a system
having a server capable of communication with a user
20 terminal and a plurality of helper terminals for
providing information to the user terminal, comprising:

a storage step of storing helper information of
the plurality of helper terminals;

a reception step of receiving from the user
25 terminal an inquiry about information desired by a
user; and

a selection step of selecting helper terminals in

accordance with the inquiry received at said reception step and the helper information stored by said storage step.

5 15. A storage medium storing a computer readable program for realizing a control method of controlling a system having a server capable of communication with a user terminal and a helper terminal for providing information to the user terminal, the program
10 comprising:

 a storage step of storing helper information of the helper terminal;

 a reception step of receiving from the user terminal an inquiry about information desired by a
15 user; and

 a selection step of selecting the helper terminal in accordance with the inquiry received at said reception step and the helper information stored by said storage step.

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 16. A storage medium storing a computer readable program for realizing a control method of controlling a system having a server capable of communication with a user terminal and a plurality of helper terminals for
25 providing information to the user terminal, the program comprising:

 a storage step of storing helper information of

the plurality of helper terminals;

a reception step of receiving from the user terminal an inquiry about information desired by a user; and

- 5 a selection step of selecting helper terminals in accordance with the inquiry received at said reception step and the helper information stored by said storage step.